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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER	
CANFIELD, ROBERT	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3600	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Interview Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/634,499	GROHMAN, MARTIN	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Robert J. Canfield	3635	

All participants (applicant, applicant's representative, PTO personnel):

(1) *Robert J. Canfield*. (3)*Brandon Warner*.

(2) *Andrew Colombo*. (4)_____.

Date of Interview: *09 January 2007*.

Type: a)☒ Telephonic b)☐ Video Conference
c)☐ Personal [copy given to: 1)☐ applicant 2)☐ applicant's representative]

Exhibit shown or demonstration conducted: d)☒ Yes e)☐ No.
If Yes, brief description: *Proposed Amendment (attached)*.

Claim(s) discussed: *Proposed 28 and 46*.

Identification of prior art discussed: *West '699, Faure '641, Erwin ' 064 and '016*.

Agreement with respect to the claims f)☒ was reached. g)☐ was not reached. h)☐ N/A.

Substance of Interview including description of the general nature of what was agreed to if an agreement was reached, or any other comments: *See Continuation Sheet*.

(A fuller description, if necessary, and a copy of the amendments which the examiner agreed would render the claims allowable, if available, must be attached. Also, where no copy of the amendments that would render the claims allowable is available, a summary thereof must be attached.)

THE FORMAL WRITTEN REPLY TO THE LAST OFFICE ACTION MUST INCLUDE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW. (See MPEP Section 713.04). If a reply to the last Office action has already been filed, APPLICANT IS GIVEN A NON-EXTENDABLE PERIOD OF THE LONGER OF ONE MONTH OR THIRTY DAYS FROM THIS INTERVIEW DATE, OR THE MAILING DATE OF THIS INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM, WHICHEVER IS LATER, TO FILE A STATEMENT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW. See Summary of Record of Interview requirements on reverse side or on attached sheet.

Robert Canfield
Primary Examiner

Examiner Note: You must sign this form unless it is an Attachment to a signed Office action.

Examiner's signature, if required

Continuation of Substance of Interview including description of the general nature of what was agreed to if an agreement was reached, or any other comments: Examiner noted typo at line 9 of proposed claim 28 ("joint" should be "joist"). Agreed that proposed 28 appeared to overcome both West and Faure. DIscussed adding limitation that the bottom of the protrusions were substantially parallel to the joist engaging surface to help distingusish from Erwin. Mr. Colombo stated he was going to present arguments that Erwin did not clearly disclose the claimed thickness particulary in view of the gap shown between the bottom of the protrusion and the top of the bottom lip which examijer said he would consider. Examiner also suggested deleting "for" from line 4 of proposed 46.

PROPOSED CLAIM AMENDMENTS

28. (Currently Amended) A deck system comprising:

a plurality of boards operable to extend across a plurality of laterally spaced joists, each of said boards presenting an upper lip and a lower lip, said upper and lower lips defining a pair of longitudinally extending grooves on generally opposite sides of the board, ~~and~~ said lower lip having a thickness "E"; and

a plurality of generally T-shaped fasteners each operable to rigidly couple to the joists, each of said fasteners presenting a generally solid base including a lower joist-engaging surface for engaging the joists and a pair of protrusions each having a bottom surface spaced vertically upward from the ~~joint~~ joist-engaging surface, ~~height "F,"~~ said bases presenting waist portions defining generally uniform gaps between said boards, each of the protrusions extending generally perpendicularly from a vertical axis of the fastener, each of said protrusions further operable to be received in a respective groove of a respective board in a substantially complemental fashion, wherein ~~"F" is the~~ an average vertical distance ~~from the base to the protrusions~~ "F" is defined between the joist-engaging surface and at least a portion of the bottom surface of the protrusion, wherein said at least a portion of the bottom surface of the protrusion is closer to the waist portion than to the distal end of the protrusion and "E" is at least 1% greater than "F[[.]]" along said at least a portion of the bottom surface of the protrusion, such that the joist and the at least a portion of the bottom surface of the protrusion cooperatively exert a compressive force on the lower lip when the joist-engaging surface engages the joist and the protrusion is received in a respective groove of a respective board in a substantially complemental fashion.

46. (Currently Amended) A method of coupling a plurality of boards to a plurality of support members, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) rigidly attaching a first generally T-shaped fastener to a first support member, the first fastener having a base including a lower support member engaging surface ~~for~~ engaging the support member and at least one protrusion, the protrusion extending generally perpendicularly from a vertical axis of the fastener;

(b) positioning a first board across the first support member and against the rigidly-attached first fastener such that the protrusion of the first fastener is at least partially received in a first longitudinal groove of the first board to form a mating relationship between the first board and the first fastener, wherein the positioning of the first board and the first fastener in the mating relationship causes the protrusion of the first fastener to flex and exert a first downward holding force on the first board, wherein -

the longitudinal groove is generally defined by a upper lip and a lower lip,

the first holding force is exerted against the lower lip by at least a portion of the protrusion that is closer to the vertical axis of the fastener than to the distal end of the protrusion, and

the vertical thickness of the lower lip is at least 1% greater than the average vertical distance from the support member engaging surface of the base to the bottom surface of the protrusion at said at least a portion of the protrusion;

(c) positioning a second fastener against the first board such that a protrusion of the second fastener is at least partially received in a second longitudinal groove of the first board to form a mating relationship between the first board and the second fastener;

(d) rigidly attaching the second fastener to the first support member while maintaining the mating relationship between the first board and the first and second fasteners, the second fastener being rigidly attached to the first support member after the second fastener is positioned against the first board; and

(e) positioning a second board across the first support member and against the second fastener to thereby form a mating relationship between the second board and the second fastener, the second fastener being disposed generally between the first and second boards and causing a generally uniform gap to be maintained between the first and second boards.